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EXCISE INDICATE COLLECT CHARGE TO

34

FM AMEMBASSY SAN SALVADOR

DEPARTMENT OF STATE-A/GDC/MR
REVIEWED BY [redacted] DATE 1984
RDS☐or XDS☐EXT. DATE
TS AUTH. REASON(S)
ENDORSE EXISTING MARKINGS ☐
DECLASSIFIED☐ RELEASABLE☐
RELEASE DENIED in part
CIA or FOI EXEMPTIONS B6

E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: CASC (SULLIVAN, JOHN J.)
SUBJECT: M/M JOHN J. SULLIVAN

ACTION: SECSTATE WASHDC 0655

CONS - 2

INFO: UNCLAS SAN SALVADOR

AMB
DCM
CHRON

1. For the Department's information, the following is a summary of the Embassy's efforts in the Sullivan case:

2. Since January 1981:

A. We have received 4 letters

1) August 28, 1981 from [redacted] informing us Sullivan was alive. We could not locate [redacted] for corroboration. Ref. 81 San Salvador 6474. B6

2) October 1981, letter received by Washington Post. We ran an ad asking writer to contact us. Subsequently, we were contacted by a man who later perpetrated hoax in Honduras. Ref. 81 State 279964; 81 San Salvador 8615; 81 San Salvador 8557; 81 San Salvador 8033.

3) December 9, 1981, letter similar to one to Washington Post received. Writer claimed to have written letter to Post. We ran an ad asking for the writer to contact us. Ref. 81 San Salvador 9460. A woman called

DRAFTED BY: CONS:GCLannon:mca.
DRAFTING DATE: 1/26/82
TEL. EXT.: [illegible]
CONTENTS AND CLASSIFICATION APPROVED BY: AMB:[illegible]

CLEARANCES:
DCM:KMBleakley

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saying her cousin wrote letter (ref. San Salvador 0375) and a man visited Embassy saying he wrote the letter and Sullivan was in Guatemala (ref. San Salvador 0597). Both respondents knew nothing about letter.

4) January 14, 1982, unsigned letter saying Sullivan was buried in Nuevo Cuscatlan during March 1981. We ascertained burial records are in Santa Tecla and we will visit archives this week. Ref. San Salvador 0436.

B. Approximately 25 telephone calls have been received. Usually caller does not give name or address and only says Sullivan is dead or alive and hangs up. When callers do provide information we investigate. Such calls are reported to the Department by cable. So far nobody has given us any good information. Various refs. 81 San Salvador 7703, 81 San Salvador 7643, 81 San Salvador 7069, 81 San Salvador 6513, 81 San Salvador 6534, 81 San Salvador 6280, etc.

C. Four walks-ins interviewed

1) August 1981 man gave us information about bodies buried in Metalio. We subsequently dug up 2 corpses. Neither was Sullivan. Ref. 81 San Salvador 6312.

2) September 1981 man brought in a photo of his sister's wedding showing a bearded man he claimed was Sullivan. The only resemblance to Sullivan was the beard. Bearer of photo was in fact a visa seeker.

3) January 20, 1982, [redacted] called us and informed us that

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[redacted]

he saw Sullivan late 1980 at API. Matter being investigated. It appears, however, he saw another tall, bearded journalist who at the time worked for API. Ref. San Salvador 0594.

4) January 25, 1982 [redacted] visited Embassy and told us he wrote the December letter about Sullivan. His story is that Sullivan is being held in Guatemala by terrorists. He claims, however, he was incarcerated with Sullivan a year before Sullivan disappeared. Ref. San Salvador 0597.

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D. We have reviewed death records in San Salvador, Santa Ana and Chalchuapa in an effort to locate Sullivan. Refs. 81 San Salvador 6618, 81 San Salvador 2115.

E. Consular Section personnel have viewed the remains of many bodies and disinterred 2 others in our search for John Sullivan. Various refs. 81 San Salvador 1216, 81 San Salvador 1934, 81 San Salvador 6312, etc.

F) Embassy has approached GOES at various levels at various times requesting reports and/or reminding GOES that USG is interested in the solving ~~xxxx~~ mystery of Sullivan's disappearance. Various Refs. 81 San Salvador 0115, 81 San Salvador 1206, 81 San Salvador 436, 81 San Salvador 1637, 81 San Salvador 4624, etc.

3. We will continue to investigate all information concerning W/W of John Sullivan. Department's assistance and support is appreciated. We assume Department is promptly relaying this voluminous information to the Sullivan Family. If that is not the case, please advise so that we can develop our own channel.

HINTON

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